



MAO TSE-TUNG

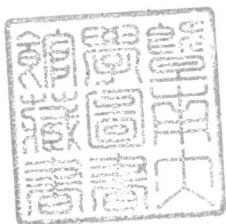
**TACTICS
IN THE ANTI-JAPANESE
UNITED FRONT**

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The present English translation of *Tactics in the Anti-Japanese United Front* has been made from the Chinese text given in the second edition of the *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*, Volume II, published by the People's Publishing House, Peking, in August 1952. It is a careful revision of the first English edition published in October 1954, and endeavours to give a more adequate rendering of the Chinese text.

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This is an outline of a report made at a meeting of the Party's senior cadres in Yen-an on March 11, 1940.

Commission on the Publication of
the Selected Works of Mao Tse-
tung, Central Committee of the
Chinese Communist Party

1. The present political situation is as follows:

(1) Japanese imperialism has been rendered powerless to launch any more large-scale military offensives by the severe blows of the Chinese forces of resistance and a strategic stalemate has been reached, but the enemy still adheres to his fundamental policy of subjugating China and is carrying it out by undermining our anti-Japanese united front, intensifying his mopping-up campaigns¹ in the rear and speeding up his economic aggression.

(2) As Britain and France find their positions in the East weakened by the war in Europe and the United States continues her policy of "sitting on top of the mountain to watch the tigers fight", the convening of a Far Eastern Munich conference² is impossible for the moment.

(3) The Soviet Union has achieved new successes in her foreign policy and continues her policy of giving active help to China's War of Resistance.

¹ The Japanese invaders' euphemism for their barbarous "policy of triple atrocity" of burning all, killing all and looting all.

² A conference proposed by the British, American and French imperialists in collaboration with the Chinese capitulators. The absurd view that such a conference would not be a Far Eastern Munich was held by Chiang Kai-shek.

(4) The pro-Japanese section of the big bourgeoisie has long since completely capitulated to Japan and is ready to appear on the political scene in a puppet-show staged by Japan. The pro-European and pro-American section of the big bourgeoisie may continue to resist Japan, but it still presents a serious problem in its proneness to compromise with her. It adopts a dual policy of uniting with the non-Kuomintang forces against Japan and at the same time doing its utmost to destroy them, especially the Communists and the progressives. It forms the die-hard section in the anti-Japanese united front.

(5) The middle-of-the-road forces, including the middle bourgeoisie, the enlightened gentry and some regional power groups, often take an intermediate position between the progressives and the die-hards because they are in contradiction with the main ruling section of the big landlords and the big bourgeoisie on the one hand, and with the workers and the peasants on the other. They constitute the middle-of-the-road section in the anti-Japanese united front.

(6) The progressive forces under the leadership of the Communist Party, namely the proletariat, the peasantry and the urban petty bourgeoisie, have recently grown much stronger and have in the main succeeded in establishing base areas under democratic anti-Japanese governments. Their influence is very great among the workers, peasants and urban petty bourgeoisie throughout the country and is also quite considerable among the middle-of-the-roaders. On the

anti-Japanese front the Communist armies are fighting almost as many Japanese troops as the Kuomintang armies. They constitute the progressive section of the anti-Japanese united front.

That is the present political situation in China. There is still a possibility of improving the situation or preventing its deterioration, and the Central Committee's resolutions of February 1 are entirely correct.

2. The basic condition for our victory in the Anti-Japanese War is the extension and consolidation of the anti-Japanese united front. To attain this end we must adopt the tactics which consist of three inseparable links, of strengthening the progressives, winning over the middle-of-the-roaders and opposing the die-hards, and use struggle as a means to strengthen unity among all the anti-Japanese forces. In the period of the anti-Japanese united front, struggle is the means of attaining unity and unity the aim of struggle. The truth that unity is achieved by struggle and destroyed by compromise is being grasped by our Party comrades. Many still do not understand this, for instance, those who either think that struggle will split the united front or that there is no limit to struggle, and those who either use the wrong tactic towards the middle-of-the-roaders or cherish illusions about the die-hards; all these mistakes must be corrected.

3. To strengthen the progressives means to develop the forces of the proletariat, the peasantry and the urban petty bourgeoisie; to enlarge boldly the Eighth Route Army and the New Fourth Army; to establish

extensive democratic anti-Japanese base areas; to develop the organizations of the Communist Party throughout the country; to develop on a nation-wide scale the mass movements of the workers, peasants, youth, women and children; to win over the nation's intellectuals; and to extend among the people the democratic movement for constitutional government. Only by developing the progressive forces step by step can we prevent the deterioration of the situation, forestall capitulation and splits, and lay a firm indestructible foundation for victory in the Anti-Japanese War. But the strengthening of the progressives involves a serious struggle ruthlessly conducted not only against the Japanese imperialists and collaborators, but also against the die-hards. The reason is that the die-hards are opposed to the strengthening of the progressive forces, while the middle-of-the-roaders are sceptical about it. Unless we conduct an uncompromising struggle against the die-hards and achieve tangible results, we shall not be able to resist their pressure or dispel the scepticism of the middle-of-the-roaders, and consequently there will be no way to strengthen the progressive forces.

4. To win over the middle-of-the-roaders means to win over the middle bourgeoisie, the enlightened gentry and the regional power groups. These people, though of three different categories, all belong to the middle-of-the-road group in the present conditions. The middle bourgeoisie is the national bourgeoisie, as distinguished from the comprador class or the big bour-

geoisie. Although as a class it is in contradiction with the workers and disapproves of their independence, yet, being oppressed by Japanese imperialism in the enemy-occupied areas and hampered by the big landlords and the big bourgeoisie in the Kuomintang-controlled areas, it still wants to resist Japan and to win political power for itself. In regard to the war against Japan it favours united resistance; and in regard to the fight for political power it favours the movement for constitutional government and attempts to achieve its own objective by exploiting the contradictions between the progressives and the die-hards. We must win over this section. The enlightened gentry is the left-wing of the landlord class, consisting of those landlords with a bourgeois complexion and a political attitude somewhat like that of the middle bourgeoisie. Although as a class they are in contradiction with the peasants, they are also in contradiction with the big landlords and the big bourgeoisie. They do not favour the die-hards and also want to take advantage of the contradictions between us and the die-hards to attain their own political ends. We should on no account neglect this section and must adopt the policy of winning it over. The regional power groups consist of two types, the regional chiefs and the chiefs of troops of miscellaneous brands¹ with no particular regional

¹ Armed forces under various warlords who, in spite of their allegiance to the Kuomintang government, did not belong to Chiang Kai-shek's personal clique. Nominally part of the Kuomintang army, these forces were not treated on

authority. In contradiction with the progressive forces and also with the self-seeking Kuomintang central authorities whose policy it is to encroach upon the interests of others, these groups try to attain their own political ends by exploiting the contradictions between us and the die-hards. The leaders of the regional groups belong mostly to the big landlord class and the big bourgeoisie, and therefore, progressive as they are from time to time in the Anti-Japanese War, they always after a short while revert to reaction; provided we pursue a correct policy towards them, their contradiction with the Kuomintang central authorities makes it possible for us to neutralize them in our struggle with the die-hards.

Our policy towards these three types of middle-of-the-road forces is to win them over. However, there is a difference between winning them over and winning over the peasantry and the urban petty bourgeoisie, and each type has to be won over in a different way. We have to win over the peasantry and the urban petty bourgeoisie as principal allies, and the middle-of-the-roaders only as allies against imperialism. The middle bourgeoisie and the enlightened gentry among the middle-of-the-roaders can join our fight against Japan and for an anti-Japanese democratic government, but

an equal footing with the so-called "Central Army". They were popularly known as troops of "miscellaneous brands" because, like certain manufactured articles, they were supposed to be of an inferior make as compared with the "standard brand" of the "Central Army".

they are afraid of the agrarian revolution. In the struggle against the die-hards, some of them may take part to a limited extent, others may observe a benevolent neutrality, and still others may be compelled by circumstances to remain neutral. The regional power groups, however, apart from joining us in the resistance to Japan, will only observe a temporary neutrality when we conduct struggles against the die-hards and, belonging as they do to the big landlord class and the big bourgeoisie, they will not join us in establishing a democratic government. The middle-of-the-roads are apt to vacillate and will inevitably disintegrate, and we should educate and criticize them in a proper way in so far as they vacillate.

It is a very important task in the period of the anti-Japanese united front to win over the middle-of-the-road forces, and the task can be accomplished only under certain conditions. The conditions are: (1) that we have ample strength; (2) that we respect their interests; and (3) that we win victory after victory in our resolute struggle against the die-hards. Without these conditions they will vacillate or even join the die-hards in attacking us, since the die-hards are also trying their best to win them over and isolate us. The middle-of-the-road forces carry considerable weight in China, and can often be the decisive factor in our struggle against the die-hards: we must therefore handle them with great care.

5. The die-hards at present are the forces of the big landlord and the big bourgeois classes. These

classes, now divided into those who capitulate to and those who resist Japan, will gradually differentiate even further. In the big bourgeoisie at present those who favour resistance must be distinguished from those who are capitulators. The former pursue a dual policy of favouring the united fight against Japan for the time being while taking the extremely reactionary course of persecuting the progressives to prepare the way for their eventual capitulation to the enemy. As they are still willing to unite with us to fight Japan, it is possible for us to keep them in the anti-Japanese united front; the longer the better. It is wrong to ignore this policy of winning them over and co-operating with them and to consider them as if they had surrendered to the enemy and would immediately launch an anti-Communist war. But at the same time we must adapt our tactics to combat their reactionary policy and carry on an uncompromising ideological, political and military fight against them, because they pursue a reactionary policy of suppressing the progressives throughout the country, refuse themselves to carry out the common programme of the revolutionary Three People's Principles while stubbornly opposing our efforts to carry it out, obstinately attempt to confine our activities within limits laid down by them, in other words, to force us to accept their line of passive resistance to the Japanese and finally, attempt to absorb us by ideological, political and military pressure. This is our dual revolutionary policy

to meet the dual policy of the die-hards, and this is our policy of attaining unity through struggle.

If we can carry through an uncompromising struggle against the die-hards ideologically by advancing correct revolutionary theories against their counter-revolutionary theories, politically by employing timely tactics against their anti-Communist, anti-progressive policy, and militarily by making the appropriate moves against their military offensive, then we can limit the effectiveness of their reactionary policy and force them to give due recognition to the progressives, thereby strengthening the progressives, winning over the middle-of-the-roaders and isolating the die-hards. We can also induce those die-hards who are still willing to resist Japan to remain longer in the anti-Japanese united front, thereby averting a renewal of the large-scale civil war of the past. Thus in the period of the anti-Japanese united front, the struggle against the die-hards is not merely a defensive measure to preserve and foster the strength of the progressives, but also a means to prolong the die-hards' resistance to Japan and their co-operation with us, thereby averting a large-scale civil war. If there is no struggle, the progressives will be exterminated by the die-hards, the united front will disappear, there will be nothing to prevent the die-hards from capitulating to the enemy and civil war will break out again. Therefore, the struggle against the die-hards is an indispensable means for uniting all the anti-Japanese forces to secure a favourable turn in the situation and avert a large-

scale civil war — a truth that is confirmed by all our experiences.

However, in the period of the anti-Japanese united front, we must pay attention to the following principles in our struggle against the die-hards. First, the principle of self-defence. We never attack unless attacked, but must counter-attack if attacked. That is to say, we must never attack others without provocation; but once we are attacked, we must never fail to strike back. Herein lies the defensive nature of our struggle. We must resolutely, thoroughly, utterly and completely smash the military attacks of the die-hards. Secondly, the principle of victory. We do not fight unless we are sure of victory, and never fight without a plan or without preparation and without being sure of the outcome. We should know how to take advantage of the contradictions among the die-hards and must not fight many of them at any one time, but must aim our blow first at the most reactionary. Herein lies the limited nature of the struggle. Thirdly, the principle of truce. After we have repulsed the die-hards and before they launch a new attack, we should cease hostilities at the proper moment and bring that particular fight to a close. Both sides should then stop fighting. At this juncture we should initiate moves for unity and, if our adversaries are willing, conclude a peace agreement with them. We must on no account keep on fighting all the time, nor become dizzy with success. Herein lies the temporary nature of each struggle. The struggle is to be renewed only

when the die-hards launch a new offensive. In other words, the three principles are justifiability, expediency and restraint. Strict observance of these principles in our struggle will help to strengthen the progressives, win over the middle-of-the-roaders, isolate the die-hards and make the die-hards think twice before launching attacks on us, compromising with the Japanese invaders or starting civil war on a large scale. We can in this way secure a favourable turn in the situation.

6. A heterogeneous party consisting of die-hards and middle-of-the-roaders as well as progressives, the Kuomintang taken as a whole is not to be equated with the die-hards. Because the Kuomintang's Central Executive Committee has promulgated such counter-revolutionary and disruptive decrees as the Measures to Restrict the Activities of Alien Parties¹ and has

¹ After the loss of Wuhan to the Japanese invaders in October 1938, the Kuomintang became increasingly active in its anti-Communist activities. Since January 1939 Chiang Kai-shek secretly issued a series of reactionary orders: "Measures to Restrict the Activities of Alien Parties", "Measures to Deal with the Alien Party Problem", and "Directive on Dealing with the Alien Party Problem". These measures provided for the severe restriction of the freedom of thought, speech and action of the Communist Party and all progressives and aimed at disrupting all the anti-Japanese organizations of the people. "Where the Communists were most active", the law of "collective responsibility and collective punishment" was enforced against the inhabitants and an "information network" or counter-revolutionary secret service was widely established on the basis of the *pao-chia* system—*pao* and *chia* being then the basic administrative units (ten households a *chia* and ten

mobilized all its forces against the revolutionary forces in nation-wide ideological, political, and military onslaughts, some of us think that the Kuomintang is entirely composed of die-hards; this view is wrong. Although at present the die-hards dictate the policy of the Kuomintang, they constitute only a minority of its membership as against the great majority, including a large number of nominal members, who are not necessarily die-hards. We must understand this point clearly, so that we can take advantage of the contradictions within the Kuomintang, adopt a policy of assuming different attitudes towards its different sections and make great efforts to unite with its middle-of-the-roaders and progressives.

7. It must be explicitly stipulated that the government set up in the anti-Japanese base areas must be a government of the National Anti-Japanese United Front. In the Kuomintang-controlled areas, there is as yet no such government. It is the government of all people who support resistance and democracy, a joint democratic dictatorship of several revolutionary classes over the collaborators and reactionaries. It is to be distinguished from a landlord-bourgeois dictatorship and is also somewhat different from a strict worker-peasant democratic dictatorship. The proportion of the personnel of such a government should be as

chia a pao, each with a head of its own) — to spy on the people and control their activities; and in central and northern China, preparations were made for political oppression of, and military offensives against, the Communist Party.

follows: Communists who represent the proletariat and the poor peasantry one-third, left progressives who represent the petty bourgeoisie also one-third, and middle-of-the-roaders and the rest who represent the middle bourgeoisie and the enlightened gentry the remaining one-third. Only collaborators and anti-Communists are ineligible. This general stipulation of the proportion of personnel is necessary for maintaining the principle underlying the political power of the National Anti-Japanese United Front. It represents a genuine policy of our Party which must be conscientiously carried out, without any perfunctoriness. It is a general stipulation to be applied with due consideration of specific conditions, and not by mechanical filling-up of the quotas. Certain modifications may be necessary in the government organs at the lowest level in order to prevent the domination of them by members of the bad gentry and the landlords, but there must be no violation of the fundamental principle.

We must not discriminate against the non-Communists in the government of the anti-Japanese united front on account of their particular party affiliations, if any. In an area under the anti-Japanese united front government all political parties, whether the Kuomintang or any other, should be granted legal status so long as they do not oppose but co-operate with the Communist Party. As regards the suffrage, it is the policy of the anti-Japanese united front government to grant the right to elect and to be elected to all